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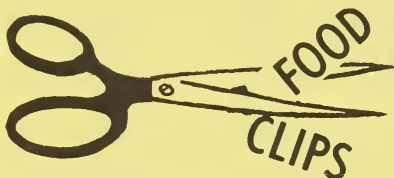
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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Refrigerate whole hams no longer than 7 days; cured half hams, cured ham slices or fresh ham, no more than 3 to 5 days. Fresh ham may be kept in the freezer (0°F or lower) 4 to 8 months, but cured hams no more than 1 to 2 months. Freezing is not recommended for cured meats, though, because it can change flavor and texture.

* * *

Which hams can you eat without cooking first? "Fully cooked" hams and canned hams are cooked thoroughly in processing and are ready to eat. If you prefer them warm, heat to an internal temperature of 140°F.

* * *

Fruit pickles are usually prepared from whole fruits and simmered in a spicy, sweet-sour sirup. They should be bright in color, of uniform size, and tender and firm without being watery. Pears, peaches, and watermelon rind are prepared this way.

* * *

Pickles and relishes contribute some nutritive value, contain little or no fat, except for the sweet type they are low in calories, according to USDA.

USDA PROPOSAL:

—on Glass Jars

Insects can—and often do—get into a jar by collecting inside the lip of quick-twist, snap-on and screw-on type lids. When the jar is opened and the vacuum seal is broken, the in-rushing air may carry dirt or insects into the jar.

In response to consumer complaints about such problems, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has proposed a change in regulations in the design of these jars which would prevent the entry of foreign material.

The proposal would require processors to either eliminate the space between the inner edge of the lid and the container, or to cover the space by placing a seal over it.

The public is welcome to comment on this USDA proposal. Please send your opinion, in duplicate, by October 1 to the USDA Hearing Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Price per pound of whole chicken, ready-to-cook, and
of chicken parts that provide equal amounts of
cooked chicken meat for the money 1/

If the price per pound of whole fryers, ready to cook, is--	Chicken parts are an equally good buy if the price per pound is--					
	Breast half		Drumstick and thigh	Drumstick	Thigh	Wing
	With rib	Without rib				
Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
41-----	54	56	44	42	46	33
43-----	57	59	46	44	48	35
45-----	59	61	48	46	50	36
47-----	62	64	50	48	52	38
49-----	65	67	53	50	55	39
51-----	67	70	55	53	57	41
53-----	70	72	57	55	59	43
55-----	73	75	59	57	61	44
57-----	75	78	61	59	63	46
59-----	78	80	63	61	66	48
61-----	81	83	66	63	68	49
63-----	83	86	68	65	70	51
65-----	86	89	70	67	72	52
67-----	89	91	72	69	75	54
69-----	91	94	74	71	77	56
71-----	94	97	76	73	79	57
73-----	97	100	78	75	81	59
75-----	99	102	81	77	84	60
77-----	102	105	83	79	86	62
79-----	104	108	85	81	88	64
81-----	107	110	87	83	90	65
83-----	110	113	89	85	92	67
85-----	112	116	91	88	95	69
87-----	115	119	93	90	97	70
89-----	118	121	96	92	99	72
91-----	120	124	98	94	101	73
93-----	123	126	100	96	104	75
95-----	126	130	102	98	106	77
97-----	128	132	104	100	108	78
99-----	131	135	106	102	110	80

1/ Based on yields of cooked chicken meat with skin (only 1/2 skin on wings and
backs included), from frying chickens, ready to cook, that weighed about 2 3/4
pounds.

Chicken remains one of the best buys at the meat counter -- even at prices twice as high as last year according to U.S. Department of Agriculture family home economists. But---not all packages of chicken are equally good buys. You really need to know which is a good buy -- and which isn't.

As an example, you would generally expect to pay more per pound for the meatier parts of the chicken--the leg or breast--than for the whole bird. Yet a consumer at one time may pay 20 to 30 cents a pound for the convenience of having all drumsticks or all breasts instead of the whole chicken, and at another time, pay less for meat from the chicken parts. In order to make wise choices, consumers need to know when these chicken parts are as good a buy as the whole bird.

The table shows a scale of prices per pound of chickens, ready-to-cook, and-- on the line opposite each price--the prices per pound of chicken parts that provide equal amounts of meat for the money. Prices from this table can be used with prices in local stores to find the best buys in chicken.

The table can be used to estimate the added cost, if any, of using chicken parts rather than the whole chicken. For example, the table shows that breast halves with ribs at 97¢ a pound, drumsticks and thighs at 78¢ a pound, drumsticks at 75¢ a pound, thighs at 81¢ a pound, and wings at 59¢ a pound are as good buys as whole chicken, ready-to-cook at 73¢ a pound. Any amount above these prices for parts--when ready-to-cook whole chicken is 73¢--pays for the convenience of having the parts of the chicken.

The table can also be used to determine which of several chicken parts is the best buy. For example, prices of drumsticks and thighs might be compared as follows: Locate the store price of drumsticks (96¢) in the column headed "Drumstick." Compare the price in the "Thigh" column on the same line (104¢) to the store price of thighs. If the store price is lower than 104¢, thighs are the better buy; if the store price is higher than 104¢, drumsticks are the better buy.

USDA: New Regulation

Lunch meats, frankfurters, and other processed meat products no longer can contain pre-mixed spices and curing agents due to a new U.S. Department of Agriculture regulation. Laboratory analyses have indicated that pre-mixes may cause the formation of nitrosamines -- chemicals that have been found to be a health hazard to laboratory animals.

Extensive testing measures were begun in June by USDA and the Food and Drug Administration when officials of the Canadian Ministry of Health reported the finding of nitrosamines in spice and curing agent pre-mixes in Canada.

Officials of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service say that packers and processors are not permitted to use spices and flavorings which are pre-packaged with curing agents unless the mixtures contain a buffering agent. No buffered mixes have been found to contain nitrosamines. Therefore, pre-mixes not containing buffering agents cannot be used.

This action was necessitated by a change in Food and Drug Administration regulations which removed spice and curing agent pre-mixes from the "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS) category July 19. USDA's action was announced the following day.

COMMENTS AND INQUIRIES TO:

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